



White-tailed Deer Fawns

Introduction

White-tailed deer fawns, born between mid-May and July, are one of the park's most engaging and beautiful creatures. Visitors concerned about these youngsters often pick them up or pet them, which may ultimately reduce their ability to survive. **The best course of action when you see a fawn is to leave it alone.**



Photo by Bill Moses

Fawn Behavior

Fawns are born relatively scentless and are brown with white spots. These characteristics provide camouflage which allows fawns to conceal themselves from predators – their primary form of defense.

When approached by a human, the natural response of a fawn is to remain still and silent, lay its head down and try to hide. Even when physically touched, the fawn may not move.

Adult female deer do not remain close to their fawns in order to prevent drawing attention to them. However, they do keep watch over their fawns from a distance throughout the day.

Fawns find their own places to hide – usually in tall grass or the forest. The adult female deer will come to find them several times per day to nurse. Sometimes, during high visitor use periods, fawns will not be able to nurse as regularly because the adult female cannot approach safely.

Is the fawn 'abandoned' by its mother?

No. If a fawn doesn't move when you approach, it is simply doing what comes naturally – trying to hide and hoping you won't see it. Leaving the area will make the fawn more comfortable and allow an opportunity for the adult female to approach when necessary.

What To Do If You See A Fawn In the Park

Please DO NOT touch or otherwise disturb fawns.

National Park Service regulations prohibit the "feeding, touching, teasing, frightening, or intentional disturbing of wildlife ..." (36 CFR 2.2)

Adult female deer, in high density deer herds, may be very careful in identifying their own fawns. Touching or otherwise handling a fawn

alters its scent and may cause the adult female to abandon the fawn. Abandonment will result in starvation and death.

Additional Information

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